

Coffee Through First Period

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Coffee Through First Period

by [OBLVN](#)

Summary

The one thing Dream didn't expect when taking on his new job as an AP World History teacher at a local high school, was how embarrassingly quick he would start feeling a sweet attraction towards one of his colleagues. By the end of his first day, reoccurring encounters with the AP Calculus teacher Mr. Davidson, or George, have led to Dream taking one of George's jokes, and carrying it on throughout the entirety of his first week. Coffee bonding and candy sharing cause for an interesting, flirtatious dynamic to blossom, and Dream decides pining over crushes is to be left to his students, instead planning to take matters into his own hands.

Notes

I speedran this 10k mofo in 3 days because I couldn't get the teacher au out of my head and because my adhd told me to

Dream and George have expressed they are completely fine with shipping, but if they ever change their mind I will gladly take this down.

Side note: Dream will just be referred to as 'Dream' throughout the story, I only used 'Clay' like twice for the purpose of realism, because I didn't want to mess with the vibe by calling him 'Mr. Dream Wastaken'

Enjoy :)

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

If Dream didn't know any better, he'd think he had taken a job at the local zoo, considering the animalistic noises that fill his ears as soon as he steps through the main entrance of the building. In reality, it's students on a Monday morning, very clearly expressing their displeasure as they protest the start of the new week.

He scans the main hall, kids gathered in groups chatting about their weekends, an occasional teacher pushing their way through while distributing warnings all around, whether it be about dress codes or the volume of their voices. A janitor seems to joke about with some, leaving with a friendly wave to attend to his duties.

The small signs hung from the ceiling point in every direction possible, reminding students -and new teachers- where the different classrooms are. There is no sign for the teacher's lounge, however. *Just his luck* .

Still feeling rather out of place, Dream makes his way over to the student service desk off to the side, where a lady with gray hair tied up into a tight bun is peeking over her glasses at her monitor. That is, until he appears in front of it.

“Good morning, how can I— Oh!” She interrupts her own sentence as she looks up at him, recognition flashing across her face. “I remember you! So you took the job,” she smiles.

“Yeah, I did,” Dream laughs awkwardly. When he had come in for his interview two weeks earlier, she had led him to one of the staff rooms, filling the entire walk there with her chats about the ‘school spirit’, and ‘how lovely all the teachers are’, and whatnot. He hadn't gotten a chance to speak a word as she rambled on, until she left him at the door of the principal's office, giving him not one, but *two* thumbs up before heading off again.

“Lovely! How can I help you, darling?” She asks sweetly, her wrinkly eyes smiling with her. The first bell rings before he can ask and he glances over his shoulder, watching the students disperse into different hallways, heading to their classes.

“Do you have any directions to the teacher's lounge?” He asks as he turns back, and she nods quickly, before rummaging through a drawer of her desk. A floor map is laid out on the barrier separating the service desk from the hall, and Dream looks down as she points at corridors, and then at one of the signs hanging from the ceiling, describing the general route he should take. With a kind ‘thank you’, and an optimistic little wave, he takes off to embark on a search around his new workplace.

The building seems more like a maze than an actual school, hallways joining at strange places, making for inconvenient intersections where all students have to cross. Now that the second bell has rung though, it's mostly empty, giving Dream a chance to snoop around and peek through the windows in the doors. His first class to teach only starts third period, so he takes his sweet time getting used to the foreign building.

It doesn't take long, however, for him to become *extremely* lost.

He roams strange hallways, now more focussed on finding the correct classroom numbers rather

than looking into them, until he spots some of the numbers the front desk lady had described to him. One door in the middle of the hallway stands out, no little plate with a number on it, and no window to look through. *Bingo*, he thinks.

Relieved, he grabs the handle and swings the door open with a sigh, stepping over the threshold onto the gray linoleum. Except, he finds out foolishly quickly that this is, in fact, *not* the room he was looking for, when about twenty-five sets of curious eyes settle on his untimely appearance. He looks sideways to a man standing in front of a whiteboard, eyebrow cocked in surprise as their gazes meet.

“Late comers need an explanation slip from the front desk,” the man jokes after a few silent seconds, the classroom filling itself with silent giggles and whispers, not a particularly reassuring sound.

“This is not the teacher’s lounge,” Dream responds matter-of-factly, pointing a finger gun at him with a lopsided smile.

“AP Calculus,” he laughs, and only now Dream notices the British accent with which the words roll off his tongue. “Teacher’s lounge is two doors down to the left,” he explains, and Dream nods gratefully.

“Thanks, so sorry, go on with your class,” he excuses himself as he waves apologetically, before stepping back through the door and closing it behind him, the dull thud of wood on wood definitively ending his first encounter with a filled classroom. He hears laughter erupt through the thin walls and drags his hand across his quickly reddening face. *Great first impression, Dream*, he thinks to himself as he shuffles away, further down the hall. The embarrassment only gets *slightly* worse as he gets to the door described to him, noticing the plate screwed to the wall, ‘teacher’s lounge’ engraved in it in bold letters.

The bell ringing sharply to signify the end of the first period startles Dream out of his concentration. After having introduced himself to the two other teachers that were also residing in the lounge and having chatted a bit about their courses -Spanish and music, he learned-, he got to work, going over the year’s schedule and syllabus one more time, before setting out to plan out the classes he was to teach the following week.

After a big stretch and a glimpse at the clock, he gets up for a well deserved cup of coffee. When sitting back down, he notices the somewhat familiar voice greeting the other teachers on their way out, before turning to him.

“Quite the entrance you made there,” he sparks their conversation with, and Dream looks up from his laptop, right into the eyes of the calculus teacher whose class he had disturbed. He displays a friendly smile as he sits down across from Dream at the table.

“Yeaah,” Dream says, dragging out the word, as he grimaces slightly over the fresh memory that’ll doubtlessly breed cringe in his stomach for another while. “How obvious did it make the whole ‘new teacher’ thing?”

“Only a little,” he says, waving his hand dismissively. Dream drops his grimace and smiles. “But

by a little, I mean a lot," he adds, causing for a breathy laugh to escape Dream as he throws his head back to look at the ceiling plates.

"Dang, scrap me thinking this was going to be a smooth sail," he says as he drags his hands across his face and lifts himself back up. The other man's chuckles fill the room, and Dream can't help but smile as well.

"The life of a teacher at a high school is never a smooth sail, I'll tell you that much," he answers, reaching out his hand. Dream takes it gently in his, shaking softly. "George, by the way," he says, "Davidson." He looks back at Dream expectantly.

"Clay Andrews, I teach AP World History," he answers.

"Oh boy, good luck with that," George laughs, as he retracts his hand, leaving a warmth lingering on Dream's fingertips, a feeling he can't quite place. He shakes the thought away as he drops his hand back to the table.

"What? Why?" Dream inquires, interest piqued, but also a slight nervousness settling in.

"That was Karl's class, everyone loved him, you're gonna have to try really hard to measure up to him," George explains, bringing a frown to Dream's face.

"Amazing," he mutters, looking over his computer screen in thought before he meets eyes with George again. "Any advice then? I'm pretty competitive," he says semi-seriously. He likes a challenge, he won't deny it, but teaching a herd of hormonal teenagers could be a big enough one on its own. Having to replace a student-favorite teacher, he might as well dig his grave right then and there. George laughs and shakes his head.

"God, no, this one's all for you," he answers as he rises from his seat and shoves his chair back to walk over to the coffee machine. As soon as Dream catches himself following him with his eyes, he snaps his head back to look over the screen again. *What the hell*, he thinks to himself, *it's been five minutes, stop that*.

"Karl just made everything funny, even the boring stuff, it was a natural thing," George continues as the coffee machine starts protesting from the corner of the little kitchen.

"Why did he leave? Seems like a cool guy," Dream wonders out loud.

"He and his partner adopted a baby, pretty cute, so he wanted the rest of the year off," George answers as he picks his phone from his pocket, immediately scrolling before he seems to find what he's looking for and he places it down in front of Dream. "That's him, on the left, the other one's Nick. I introduced them to each other a few years back," George reminisces as he claims the coffee and sits down again, while Dream takes the phone in his hands to look over the picture of the two men smiling brightly with a baby in their arms.

"That's adorable," Dream says, unintentionally soft. He notices the way he stares at the photo a little too long and quickly hands the phone back to George, fingers brushing together momentarily in the exchange. George takes a last quick, warmhearted glance at the screen before he shoves it into his pocket again.

"I'm sure you'll be fine though, seriously," he then says as he dumps a generous amount of milk into his cup. Dream notices the way he appears almost mesmerized by how it blooms up in his cup like an expanding cloud. "You're charming, wouldn't surprise me if they already love you by the end of the day," he seems to say thoughtlessly. The words float in the air for a little before Dream

really takes them in. Did he just...?

“Charming?” He asks, cracking a grin as he sees George freeze, seemingly returning to planet Earth from his daydream with the milk carton still in hand.

“What?” He asks as he lifts his head, his face dropped in an expression that makes Dream think an alarm is blaring on a hundred percent volume inside his head, trying to keep his face steady while he panics internally.

“You said I’m charming,” Dream repeats. His smile grows wider as the tiniest tinge of pink spreads across George’s face while he looks away, searching for a distraction of any sort around the room, the dirty window in the back suddenly taking up his undivided attention. Dream doesn’t quite understand the feeling swelling in his chest— pride? Achievement?

“Oh, yeah, I did,” he says as he quickly takes a sip, pulling a face as he seems to realize it’s still too hot to drink without burning the roof of his mouth. “Charming in, like, the professional sense of the word,” he adds, daring to look back at Dream again.

“Mm-hm,” Dream hums as he nods. His arms cross in front of his chest as he leans back and examines George’s face once more. “You are too, in the professional sense of the word,” he says, and he watches his expression soften into a smile as he rolls his eyes.

“O- *kay* ,” he says as he initiates eye contact once more, both allowing it to last a few silent seconds, before George picks up his cup and stands up. “I have to prepare for my next class, they like the notes pre-written on the board,” he says as he pushes the chair back under the table.

“Alright, I’ll see you around, then,” Dream says, genuine glee plastered on his face. An expression he doesn’t think will be wiped off of him today anymore.

“Alright,” George parrots, picking up his bag.

“Alright,” Dream repeats once more as George locomotes over to the open door, briefly turning back around when he meets the doorstep.

“Bye then,” he says lastly as he sticks up his hand and walks out, leaving Dream leaned back in his chair, shaking his head and laughing for nobody else to hear. First days always seem *something else* .

As promised by George, the students walking into his class that third period seem less than pleased with the new face that has installed himself behind the desk. He chooses not to pay attention to the glares sent his way as the kids flow into the room and sit down at their own respective spots. The whispers are telling enough, he’s not being welcomed with opened arms.

“Didn’t you walk into Calculus this morning?” One voice asks from the side of the room. When Dream looks up and scans the faces in front of him, a shy hand is raised, and he looks over the boy it belongs to.

“I did, yes, your school is like a labyrinth,” he says as he stands up. “You paid attention, nice work,” he compliments before the second bell rings, and he walks over to the door to close it. A

last student hurries in, but then all desks are filled and he takes the liberty of sitting down on top of his own. *Show them you're relaxed, you're cool*, he thinks as their analytical gazes get stuck on him.

“I’m sure you’ve noticed by now I’m not Mr. Jacobs, he will be on paternity leave for the rest of the year, so you’re burdened with me,” he says, watching faces contort into confusion, and soft murmuring ensues. “I’m aware you’re all seniors who want to pass their exams by the end of this year, so let’s all work together to reach that goal, yeah?”

Another hand is raised from the middle of the class, belonging to a girl who squints her eyes at him. *Strange, but understandable*. He gestures for her to speak up.

“What subject do you teach?” She asks. Dream frowns, *they know what class they’re in, don’t they?*

“Exactly what you’re here for, AP World History,” he answers. He jumps as the entire class guffaws, students turning to each other in amusement. His frown deepens, and he considers the possibility they were very much aware they were to expect a new teacher, and planned this as a little prank. When he drops his jaw to speak up, the door to the classroom opens, and in walks a small woman, books stacked in her arms.

“Sorry I’m late, class, I was—,” she pauses as she spots Dream sitting on the desk. “Who are you?” She asks, studying him through her glasses. The sudden realization hits him like someone has flung a brick right into his abdomen.

“This is not AP World History, is it,” he says as he slithers off the desk to stand on his feet. The similarity to this morning almost physically hurts as much as it does mentally. The other teacher has to stifle a laugh.

“Same room number, one floor up,” she says. “This is English Literature.”

“Again?” He whines, quickly grabbing all of his papers from the desk and stuffing them in his bag under the sound of laughter. “I am so sorry,” he says as he throws his bag over his shoulder and snatches his coat from the chair. The other teacher looks amused, rather than bothered when she puts her books down. “So sorry!” He yells once more as he exits the room, taking off in a sprint towards the stairs.

Out of breath and too hot for his liking, he arrives at the classroom he was supposed to be in. The door is still halfway opened, letting the sound of gentle chattering flow into the hallway. That one particular voice stands out again.

“Well, he was here this morning, so—”

Dream steps in the room, knowing very well he looks just a whiff too disheveled to be taken seriously as a teacher. George lets his sentence falter as he looks up from the conversation he was having with the student sitting at one of the front desks.

“I was about to teach an English literature class about constitutional monarchies,” Dream says sheepishly as he scratches the back of his neck. George laughs, a high-pitched, joyous, laugh as he shakes his head and crosses his arms. The students join in with their giggles as they notice his presence.

“That would have worked out perfectly, I’d imagine,” George answers, earning more little snickers. He turns back to the class and claps his hands, grabbing everyone’s attention. “I’m leaving you

guys with Mr. Andrews now, be nice, alright?" He asks, getting obedient nods in return.

"Thanks, I owe you," Dream smiles as George walks by him towards the door.

"Hear that? I'm getting my morning coffee personally delivered to me this week," he jokes, turning to Dream to wave goodbye quickly with a mischievous smile on his face. Dream rolls his eyes and motions with his hands to shoo him away. When the door closes, he throws down his bag and coat again and stands in front of his actual class, scanning their faces.

"Alright! Hi everyone, little bit of a rocky start there, but I'm Mr. Andrews, I'll be your AP World History teacher for the rest of this year."

All his classes that day ran surprisingly, almost suspiciously smoothly, everybody making a substantial attempt at listening to him as he went over the beginning of the French Revolution. The vibe unfolded fairly naturally, students already being used to the joking manner in which Dream attempted to teach them from their previous teacher. The bell signalling the last class of the day to be over is almost disappointing to him.

"I *will* be checking who did the homework on Wednesday, so make sure you've got at least *something* written down," he says loudly to be heard over the noise of the students packing up their bags and making a bee-line for the door. Within a stunning two minutes, all the desks are empty and the room is silent apart from some birds chirping outside, and Dream shuffling some papers around on his desk in an attempt to sort and organize them.

"I told you they'd love you by the end of the day."

The unexpected voice startles Dream out of his skin, feeling like a cartoon character jumping 3 feet in the air when dropping all of his paperwork to the ground. George laughs from his leaning position against the doorframe, as he observes Dream sending a disappointed glare towards the newly disorganized pile of documents.

"You just almost killed the new guy," he says dramatically as he kneels down to gather fallen schedules and worksheets.

"That would have sucked, I was counting on that coffee delivery service," George jokes back, pushing himself up as Dream shuffles the papers together, and lets them slide neatly into a folder and into his bag. When he looks back up, one thought hits him like a paintball to the head: *you're attracted to your colleague, and he'll find out if you keep staring like that*. Nothing about him had changed since the afternoon, except for the long, dark blue, woolen coat he had put on, looking like... like *that*, too effortlessly. *Illegal*.

"You heading out?" He asks, exiling the thought from his head as he recomposes himself and rises from the floor, bag clutched in hand.

"Yeah, I like doing my administrative stuff at home, so if there's not any faculty or chess club meetings I head straight out," George tells him as he slides into his own coat.

"Chess club?" He questions curiously, meeting George by the door. They step out into the hallway together, and walking beside him, Dream notices just how much taller he is than the calculus

teacher.

“They needed a coach, asked me if I could help them out,” he shrugs, steps matching as they descend the stairs towards the main hall.

“That sounds like fun, I’ll come check it out sometime,” Dream muses as they pass by the service desk, from which the lady with the gray bun is waving enthusiastically. They wave back swiftly, before Dream holds open the glass door for George to walk through, *like the gentleman he is*, and follows him into the chilly air.

“You should,” he smiles, stuffing his hands into his coat’s pockets, a gentle fall breeze moving through his hair, causing it to fall to his forehead slightly. For one terrifying second, Dream considers reaching out and wiping it away, but he doesn’t think he could handle the embarrassment if George called him out on it. He hides further into his coat instead, shivering softly as the wind passes by his neck. “Not used to cold?” George questions as he notices Dream shrinking into himself.

“Just moved here from down south, Florida, cold doesn’t really exist there,” he chuckles back, stuffing his hands, balled into fists, away as well.

“Go get yourself home then! I won’t keep you here any longer,” George laughs, slowly taking a step back, presumably to take off to his car.

“That’s okay, I like talking to you,” Dream answers honestly, and he can’t tell if it’s the brisk wind or his comment that’s making the other blush again.

“See you tomorrow?” He asks, his face hopeful.

“See you tomorrow,” Dream confirms, nodding with a smile before they both mutter a last goodbye and turn around. The satisfaction of that day, but also the slap to the face caused by meeting George, lingers in Dream’s mind as he slides into his car, and lets it warm up a little while the soft music plays from the radio over the soft rumbling of the engine. At least he has enough food for thought that night.

The days that follow, progress somewhat like this:

Every morning, Dream makes sure to arrive at the start of first period, greeting the front desk lady, whose name he learned is Mrs. Jennifer (“but you can just say Jenny, sweetheart!”) with the question which classroom George is in, and he heads for the teacher’s lounge just as the hallways have quieted down. He makes two cups of coffee, one with sweetener, which he leaves on the table to cool down, and one with milk. With his earlier gathered knowledge, he makes his way to whatever room he was told George would be in, and knocks gently before entering.

On Tuesday morning, George was as confused as his class was as he watched Dream put down the cup on his desk, give him a thumbs up, and head out again. He suddenly had two cups of coffee

sitting ready for him to drink up.

On Wednesday morning, George knew what was happening, because he had asked Dream about it the day before, during lunch. He didn't bring his own cup, now aware Dream was taking up on his comment about bringing him coffee each morning for a week. Neither was teaching that first period, so they stayed in each other's company, Dream preparing a worksheet, George grading tests. Neither was aware the other stole quick glances every once in a while.

On Tuesday, it became familiar, and barely anyone looked up when Dream just stepped into the room without knocking. That day's cup of coffee was accompanied by a small chocolate bonbon, which George discovered was filled with a sweet passion fruit ganache.

On Friday, the cup of coffee was already on his desk when George entered the classroom. A note laid on top of four wrapped sweets, and read: '*Got class, sorry, reconciliation candy*' in rushed handwriting. He pocketed the note and popped one of the caramels into his mouth, tasting the familiar flavor. He made a small mental note; Dream likes passion fruit.

The end of that Friday rolls around, and Dream couldn't possibly feel any better about the advancement of that first week.

"Alright guys," he speaks up, catching everyone's attention from the books they're bowed down over, or the paper they're scribbling on. "Go enjoy your weekend, we're ending early." He doesn't need to repeat himself, as all students simultaneously break out into conversation while they start packing their stuff, chanting rushed '*thank you*'s from the hallway. With fifteen minutes to spare, Dream hurries to pack up as well and scurries down the stairs, trying to find room 0.17.

Now with ten minutes left until the final bell, he knocks on the door and steps in quietly, trying not to disturb any of the duos playing chess. George looks up from beside a student, flashing him a quick smile before he instructs the girl which move she could make next and why. Dream simply watches, leaning against the wall until the final bell does ring. The chess players lose their concentration, and George calls the end of the matches. Once everyone has packed up and left, the two of them remain.

"I wanted to thank you for the sweets, but I had to work through lunch," George says apologetically as he leans on the desk by the front of the room, showing no intention of leaving. Dream waves it off, glancing over him from a distance.

"I like how you say that," he answers. Everything inside him seems to soften at the look of George. All the sharp edges of his mind are suddenly gone, and he feels a sweet familiarity when George smiles.

"How I say what?" George questions, head tilted slightly sideways.

"*Sweets*," Dream imitates in his best British accent, making George throw his head back and giggle.

“How do you say it then?” He responds, leaving the ceiling tiles be as he looks forward again.

“Candy,” Dream tells him in his normal voice, causing George to immediately repeat it after him, in his worst American accent, in turn making Dream snort out a laugh. “You can say it whichever way you like, as long as you enjoyed them.”

“I did! I wish I saved some to have throughout the day, but I liked them too much and ate them all first period,” George says, scrunching up his nose in regret. Dream takes a mental photograph and laughs.

“I’ll bring more next time, they’re my favorite,” he smiles.

“Good taste,” George compliments as he eventually takes an initiative to gather his stuff.

“You think?” Dream asks genuinely, watching George nod.

“Definitely,” he answers as he turns back around. A gentle silence falls between them, as George drops his last pencils into his suitcase and straps it up. When he walks over to the door, Dream shows no sign of movement as the gears in his head start turning. *Just ask, it's not that hard.* He’d been thinking it over all week, practicing in front of the mirror, asking his own reflection if he wanted to go get coffee out of school sometime, talk in other places than break rooms during lunch and shared free periods, but he always ended up cringing at the way it sounded, or the way he looked when asking. Before he can speak up, George does.

“Some of the seniors asked me something today,” he says casually, walking through the door. Dream rushes after him, joining him at his side.

“What’d they ask?” Dream asks curiously, seeing George’s thinking face appear. He can tell George is hesitant of elaborating, making a certain, inexplicable nervousness settle in his own stomach as well.

“Nevermind, it wasn’t that important,” he settles on after a few more moments of thought.

“Sure?” Dream responds, watching George’s thinking face disappear as fast as it first showed up.

“Yeah, don’t worry about it,” George assures him, smiling gently again. Dream ponders asking once more, but decides against it as they walk over to the main hall. Looking out through the glass doors, they become aware of the storm raging outside. Jenny smiles at them apologetically with a shrug, to which Dream answers with a lopsided grin, and George with a pout.

“Crap, I really hoped the storm would float just past us,” George mumbles as he inspects the trees enduring the violence of the heavy wind, branches looking close to snapping. “Might wanna get home soon before it gets really bad,” he adds reluctantly. Dream would rather have them stay there for another while, talk about little nothings like they have been doing all week, stretching the goodbye just slightly longer, but George is right. It’d be dangerous to delay leaving.

“I’ll just have to miss you for the weekend,” he blurts out before he can think it over. Right, he *can’t* ask him to get coffee after work, but he *can* just hit him with an ‘I’ll miss you’. *Very subtle, Dream.* His face reddens as George looks up at him, but with a less shocked expression than he’d expected.

“Makes Monday look more fun, doesn’t it?” He smiles. Dream nods sheepishly at him, before with a last little wave, George leaves through the door. Dream’s eyes stay glued on him as he conquers nature’s aggression, and Dream can’t help but smile and shake his head, after which he also steps out. The rain doesn’t seem that bad anymore, anyway.

Once more, George appears to be right in his predictions. The weekend is uneventful, too stormy for any outside activities, but inside his apartment, there has been nothing else to do but grade papers and prepare classes. Dream found himself struck with boredom both of his free evenings, meekly hoping for Monday morning to come around soon.

Luckily for him, Sunday didn't actually last forever in the way it felt like it did, and soon enough he steps back through the school doors with pure determination, right at the beginning of first period. The storm has passed, and more inviting rays of sunshine fall through the windows into the main hall. Jenny automatically informs him which classroom he's looking for, and he thanks her by dropping a few of the passion fruit caramels onto her desk, which she takes gratefully before sending him off.

The scent of coffee fills the teacher's lounge as he prepares two cups. The one with sweetener stays on the table, the one with milk he takes up the stairs to the room from which he hears George's voice explain some intricate formula he doesn't understand the slightest of. Without a knock, he walks into the room, students only looking at him briefly before focusing back on the notes scribbled down on the whiteboard.

"Oh, hey, you know the week's over right?" George comments as he watches a handful of sweets land on his paperwork.

"I know, I'm just this nice," Dream smiles back as he returns to the hallway, not leaving any room for George to comment on it further. With a great sense of accomplishment, he walks down the stairs again, and the gears in his mind start turning as fast as they're capable of.

He can keep bringing George coffee each morning like he has been doing, and just silently hope for more to happen out of the blue, or he can take it into his own hands and make an attempt at turning... whatever is going on right now, into something more. The banter and the little flirtatious comments are fun, it feels like he could fit right in between the hormonal teens he teaches, but if he's being completely honest with himself, walking around with a crush in the back of his mind for the rest of the year doesn't seem appropriate anymore for his age. What has never seemed to change since his own time in high school, however, is the sheer amount of courage it takes to commence a next step, and the nerves that come with it.

Settled behind his laptop in the teacher's lounge, he starts going over his possibilities. Would it be best to just be bold? Go up to him and hit him with a good old 'I like you', and a 'want to go on a date with me?', hoping for the best? Or does he need to be subtler? Or, does he need to wait a little longer, find out which approach George would appreciate most? But then again, that could take weeks still, and patience isn't exactly something Dream is very familiar with.

He barely believes he's been going over it for as long as he has when the bell rings and shakes him out of it, realizing he spent the entire first period daydreaming over asking George out on a date. He quickly diverts his attention to his laptop screen again, wanting to at least *look* like he actually got something done, instead of staring at the wall for an hour.

"Hey!" He hears George greet him happily as he sinks into the chair across from him, immediately digging into his pocket. "You know, you didn't have to bring me coffee anymore, it's a new week," he says as he starts unwrapping one of the caramels Dream left on his desk earlier.

“Maybe I enjoy bringing you coffee,” Dream shrugs as he watches George pop the candy into his mouth and smile.

“Well, if you *insist*,” he says lowly with a small roll of his eyes. “But it’s not like the coffee here is good enough to take that effort, anyway.” Dream squints slightly at the comment, and quickly deduces it should mean one of two things. Either he actually doesn’t want Dream to bring him coffee anymore, or he’s... suggesting going somewhere else for coffee?

“You think? It’s not *too* bad, in my opinion,” Dream responds, deciding to test the waters a little bit. George seems to think as he chews on the candy softly, looking around the room like the words he’s searching for are floating around, and he needs to capture them before he can translate them to speech.

“I mean, it’s not awful, I won’t refuse a cup, there’s just places around here that have better coffee, I suppose,” he ultimately says. *Aha*.

“So you’d rather get coffee somewhere else?” Dream teases a bit, and George shrugs as he nods, swallowing the last bit of caramel before he leans back and makes eye contact. “Where would you go then?”

“I could show you a place nearby? If you’ve got time, after your last class,” George says nonchalantly. Dream feels slightly stunned at the ease with which George suggests it, not a trace of nerves detectable. Then to think he was making such a big deal about it, mere minutes earlier.

“Sounds good, Mr. Davidson,” Dream smiles, giving George the go ahead to stand up from his chair again.

“See you at lunch?” He suggests as he gets his bag.

“I’ve got some tests to grade still, so I’ll be working through lunch, but I’ll see you after classes then,” Dream says and George smiles self-satisfactory before heading towards the door. Dream would almost argue his steps are fueled by victory with the way he almost skips into the hallway. He finds himself just as happy as he was on that first day.

The sole reason Dream is tolerant of not seeing George anymore throughout the rest of the school day, is the sunny outlook he has on the end of classes, knowing he will show up at the door right after the last bell. Students don’t fail to notice his giddiness, and the pep to his step as he walks through the hallways and greets everybody individually. Anyone who answers one of his difficult questions correctly, gets thrown a candy, and smart as they are, they’ve noticed the similarity they have with the ones George keeps picking from his pockets to munch on.

Dream, in turn, noticed their little giggly whispers during class, and the curious glances thrown his way, but there’s truly nothing that could ruin his mood anymore.

Except for one thing, disturbing his second to last class of the day.

“So what happens when a country transforms from an agriculture based perspective, to one based on mechanized mass production, is what we refer to as industrialization. One of the earliest examples of industrialization is—”

His sentence is abruptly cut short as he hears shouting from the hallway, curses being flung around aggressively as well as some dull thumps on the floor.

“Hold this thought,” he tells his class before walking over to the door, but being met with an unpleasant sight as he opens it up, finding two students pushing each other around, one already a bright red mark on the side of his face.

“Hey! What’s going on here?” He yells as he rushes over to them, stepping in between to break the fight apart and push them away from each other. “Care to explain why you feel the need to fight in a school hallway?” He asks sternly, looking over both of them.

“None of your fucking business,” one of the boys snarls as he glares at the other.

“Go back to your classes, both of you,” he orders as they continue to stare each other down.

“I’m breaking your fucking arm after school,” the same one threatens while pointing a finger in the other’s direction.

“None of that!” Dream says as he turns completely towards him, frowning down on the only slightly shorter student with his arms crossed. “You just put yourself in detention, congratulations, let’s go inform Mrs. Jennifer right now,” he says as grabs the boy by the arm, attempting to pull him along, but instead being met with a form of resistance he didn’t expect. A fist meets the side of his nose, and a concerning crack makes him let go of the boy in order for his hand to fly to his face, catching the red dripping from his nostril.

“And now you got yourself expelled,” he notes calmly as the blood trickles into his hand. The other student is looking over them, stunned, and the one that blew the punch seems to realize he’s made a mistake as well.

“Mr. Andrews—”

“I don’t want to hear it, report to the front desk right now and don’t let me see your face again today,” he says decisively, discovering the small red splotch on the ground.

“I’m—”

“Now!” He shouts, the sound booming through the corridor, causing curious students to peek from the doorway to watch the boy gulp and take off towards the main hall. He turns back to the second student. “Go back to class before I send you to the principal as well,” he warns. He doesn’t have to say it twice as the guy sprints off. Dream walks back over to the classroom, his own students quickly sitting back down as they look over him.

“Right, so, I will be paying a quick visit to the nurse’s station,” he states casually, looking around for a handkerchief, but not finding any in close proximity. “Sydney, could you go find Mr. Davidson to keep an eye on you guys while I’m gone? He should be in a break room somewhere,” he adds, and a girl quickly answers with a ‘yes’, bolting out of the class. “Please behave for a few minutes while you wait,” he pleads, and most of the students simply nod before he leaves the room.

It takes a small search and the help of the English Literature teacher he met the week before to get to the nurse’s station, where his nose is looked over thoroughly. The nurse concludes there could be a small fracture, but it didn’t look like it was completely broken or in any way displaced.

“Does it hurt a lot?” The teacher -whose name he’s learned is Niki- asks him as the nurse turns to

type something into her computer.

“It’s not too bad, just the bleeding is annoying,” he answers, switching out a drenched tissue for a new one, which immediately starts turning red as well. He grimaces at the sight of his hands, also still stained with his own dried blood.

“It’s a little unorthodox, but you could put tampons in your nose, they’re a little more absorbent than those flimsy tissues,” Niki offers, and the nurse laughs, but agrees.

“Looks a little weird, but you can get home without ruining the interior of your car,” she adds, typing away. *Get home*. The two words repeat themselves in his head, and he tries to figure out what’s so bothering about them, before realization strikes like lightning and he gasps.

“Oh, crap! I was supposed to go somewhere after my last class,” he whines, slouching on the exam table he’s sitting on, an involuntary pout appearing on his face as he thinks it over.

“Yeah, does George even know what’s going on?” Niki asks, and Dream looks over at her in surprise. Niki realizes the slip of her tongue and opens her mouth to say something, but closes it again as she thinks. “He just mentioned at lunch you were getting coffee after school,” she decides on for an explanation. The nod he directs at her is suspicious, but accepting enough for her to grab her bag and start rummaging through it. Two tampons are placed in his palm as Niki flings her bag around her shoulder.

“Good luck with your nose, I have to prepare some things for my last class still,” she tells him with an apologetic smile. He waves her off, and with a wash of his hands a last ‘good luck’ from the nurse, he heads off to his own class, nostrils now stuffed with one tampon each.

“Do not say a word,” he announces as he steps back into the room, quickly looking over at George, who snorts loudly at the sight from his place behind the desk. He sends him a joking glare, before turning to the class again. “Please read up on the pages we were going to discuss today, class is dismissed for now,” he says, the familiar sight of students packing immediately appearing in front of him. By extreme exception, they leave the class in an actual calm matter, wishing Dream well on their way out. Once everyone has left, George rises to his feet and walks over to inspect Dream’s nose.

“I emailed Jenny to make sure that student that punched you reported himself, he’s at the principal’s office now,” he informs him as he reaches out, touching Dream’s nose carefully. “If you just pass by there before you head out, you can share your side of the story, and the principal will take it from there.”

“Thank you,” he answers, scrunching up his face when George gently presses on the spot that hurts the most. His hand immediately retracts and drops by his side. “The nurse said there’s probably a small fracture, but it’ll heal just fine if I don’t throw myself face first against a wall.” George laughs lightly at the comment, and the sound makes Dream forget the tampons in his nose for a second.

“Go home, we’ll get coffee some other day,” George tells him, and although it’s reluctantly, Dream nods.

“Sorry,” he offers still, but George shakes his head right away.

“Not your fault, it’s good you broke them apart, I’ve seen fights end worse,” he says, still scanning over Dream’s nose to make sure it’s okay.

“If only someone could kiss it better,” Dream jokes, still semi-serious intention hidden behind his words. He is struck with surprise as after a moment of contemplation, George stands on his toes and places a tiny, barely sensible kiss onto the tip of his nose, before flashing him that damned mischievous smile of his and walking off, leaving Dream wide-eyed and with a mind swept completely blank.

New day, new opportunity , Dream thinks as he steps through the front door of the school, nose still painful, but at least clean. He’s left the moping over his missed chance yesterday at home, and embraces the clean slate he is being offered on Tuesday morning.

“Clay!” Jenny calls from her desk, and he walks over, leaning over the barrier. “Quite the ruckus yesterday! How are you now, darling?” She asks, her facial features struck with concern.

“I’m fine, honestly. It doesn’t hurt that bad, kid got expelled, so it’s all good now,” he assures her, and her face softens.

“Good, good. I won’t keep you any longer, George is in 1.21,” she tells him, flashing a knowing smile.

“Thanks, Jenny, see you later,” he answers thankfully, heading the same direction he has been going every morning.

When he arrives at 1.21, the door is already open, and he spots students working quietly while George types away at his computer. The cup is clutched in his hands, warmth moving through his palms as he stands and watches for a while, noticing the intense concentration with which George is looking over his screen. Without a warning, he suddenly looks up, straight into Dream’s eyes, who freezes as he realizes he has been caught staring.

The concentration ebbs away from his face as he gets up and walks out the door to meet Dream in the hall, smiling at him compassionately while his eyes fix on Dream’s nose.

“Please don’t ask how my nose is,” Dream warns as he offers him the cup. “I’ve answered that question to five people since I got here, which was ten minutes ago,” he elaborates as George takes the cup with a raised eyebrow.

“And what did you tell them?” He tries.

“That it’s completely fine, and people should stop focusing on my nose so much,” he laughs, stuffing his hands in his pockets in an attempt to keep the warmth on his palms for just a little longer. *He’d rather hold George’s hands* , but that’s a thought he decides to ignore.

“Do you know what some of the kids call you?” George suddenly asks, looking over him playfully in a way that piques Dream’s interest.

“No, what do they call me?” He replies curiously.

“Mr. Dreamy,” George mocks, taking a sip as Dream’s face drops in astoundment.

“No they don’t,” he answers, feeling the blood quickly rush to his cheeks, much to George’s

amusement.

“Just a heads up for you there, the girls are going to keep asking about it because they don’t want the cute teacher’s nose to be crooked,” he laughs, watching Dream shake his head fiercely in disbelief, before he suddenly stops and looks down at George intently.

“Did you just call me cute?”

“No, *they* think you’re cute,” George defends.

“You said ‘the cute teacher’, you think I’m cute!” Dream cheers, quickly ducking down and looking around as he realizes how loud he was.

“Shut up,” George says as he shoves him away jokingly. “Thanks for the coffee, I’ll see you later,” he abruptly ends their conversation as his face turns beet red and he turns away. *Yep*, Dream thinks as he walks in the opposite direction, with a smile that couldn’t be any brighter, *he said you’re cute*

.

It’s time. It’s happening.

Thumbs twirl nervously as Dream waits outside of George’s classroom, where he has been teaching his last class before the day ends. His watch doesn’t seem to move the time any quicker as Dream attempts to speed it up with sheer willpower, leaving him picking at a loose thread on his black crewneck, ultimately leading to him cursing under his breath when a stitch appears to come loose. The last bell ringing makes him jump slightly, but the feeling soon makes place for relief when the door opens and students flow out. One minute later, the very last person to step out is George, coat already hung around his shoulders as he closes the door behind him.

“Hey,” Dream speaks up behind him, startling him visibly as he drops his suitcase and whips around.

“Jesus Christ,” he breathes out as he realizes who spooked him. “I’m very a jumpy person,” George admits as he reaches for his suitcase. Confusion strikes his eyes as he looks back up and realizes. “Weren’t you done, like, two hours ago?” He asks, and Dream nods confirmatively.

“I looked over some essays while I waited,” he shrugs. “Do you want to take me to that coffee place now?”

“You waited *two hours* to go get coffee with me?” George beams as he locks the door and adjusts the strap of his suitcase over his shoulder.

“No, I waited two hours to ask you that, and to then tell you that I’m sorry, but I have other plans,” Dream says as he rolls his eyes.

“You’re annoying,” George laughs.

“You’re getting me coffee, come on,” Dream answers, giving him a small push against his shoulder for him to lead the way.

The small coffee shop turns out to be only a few streets away, so Dream doesn't have to soldier through the for him *unbearable* cold for too long. The walk there is filled with easy chats, conversation flowing as effortlessly as it does whenever they have lunch together, or when they both have a free period and hang out in a break room. It stays somewhat surprising to Dream, how he can walk into the wrong classroom, and from *that*, blooms *this*.

This school seems like the greatest exception there is when it comes to teacher cultures. He's worked at schools where teachers barely even talked, going straight past each other's wishes, to run classes the way *they* wanted to. Here, it seems like everyone actually *wants* to work together, and create a comfortable environment. Of course, none of the other schools had someone like George walking around.

The small café is nearly empty when they enter, and Dream takes in all the details that have been implemented in the warm interior, making it look domestic, and inviting for people who look from the outside in. He gets it, the harsh wind outside blows you straight through the door and into one of the secluded booths to warm up.

George sits across from him, a large mug enveloped in his hands, steam drifting up towards his face as he closes his eyes momentarily and takes a deep breath. All the worries Dream seems to have ever had appear to melt like snow before the sun. It's just him and George, in a café, the rich smell of his coffee blessing his nose and the sight of George relaxing blessing his eyes.

"Last Friday I said something about a few seniors, right?" George speaks up, opening his eyes slowly to find Dream's already looking at him.

"Yeah, they asked you something, but you didn't say what," Dream answers, tracing a pattern onto the stone of his mug with the tip of his finger.

"Right," George recalls. "I said it wasn't that important, but I may have lied a little," he admits, still keeping eye contact. "It's still nothing big—well, in the grand scheme of things it isn't—maybe a little important? Not that I think student opinions about my personal life are too important because it's my life, not theirs, but—"

"George," Dream interrupts him with a laugh, making him fall silent. "What did they ask you? If they were being intrusive you can just call them out on it," he tells him.

"It's really not that bad," George says with a dismissive shake of his head. "It's more so that it made me think about some things more than I did the days before that," he explains, relaxing a little in his seat.

"Enlighten me," Dream smiles before he takes a sip.

"Well, a few of the girls came up to me, all giddy and stuff," he starts, looking into his light brown coffee. "They asked me if we—well, if you and I are, like, a thing."

Dream feels his heart drop down, all the way from the top of his chest to the bottom of his stomach. *That surely wasn't the thing he expected George to say.* His grip around the mug tightens slightly in tension, while his mind starts to race with thoughts that are a mix between 'what did he answer?', and 'where is this going?'.

"Mm-hm?" Dream hums calmly though, trying desperately to not let his face flush or to let any of his nervous habits show up.

"So I said: 'No, why?', because we're not, right?" He asks genuinely as he meets Dream's eyes.

Dream swallows hard and feels a sudden wave of anxiety wash over him, taking away all the comfort he had felt just a minute ago. *He wants to clear it up; he doesn't feel that way*, Dream thinks.

“We’re not, no,” Dream says, trying to keep his voice as neutral as he can.

“So they said they uh... They thought we were, like, flirting,” George continues.

“Mm-hm,” Dream hums again. *Here it goes.*

“And it got me thinking a little bit, over the weekend,” he goes on. He takes a sip in between, sighing deeply after he swallows. Dream feels his heart gripped in a tight squeeze. “I was thinking about what signals I was sending you, and if you...” He thinks for a second. “If you interpreted them the way I intended, you know?”

“Mm-hm,” Dream hums for the third time. *There it is*, he thinks, *he meant it platonically, and you got your hopes up for nothing. Bite the bullet, get it over with.* “In uh, in what way did you intend to send signals?” He asks. George looks back down into his coffee, biting on his lip slightly. Dream hadn’t seen him as thoughtful as he looks right now before. *Rip off the band aid*, he thinks, while looking at George’s hands carefully spinning the mug in his hold.

“I...” he starts, but falters as he looks up, and so does Dream. Brown meets green across the table, his eyes flash some sort of discomfort. “I was genuinely trying to flirt with you,” he says, before frowning and shaking his head, “no, *I am*, flirting with you,” he adds. Dream’s brain short circuits upon hearing him talk, and the tension in his muscles seems to reach an all time high, before it releases. He tries to keep himself steady as George continues. “But you may have seen it as me just being friendly, which would be unfair to you.” Dream has to blink a couple of times as words gather in his head, but just as easily fall apart when he tries to transport them towards his mouth. “I didn’t want it to get to an awkward point where you find out I had been flirting for months while you were just bantering, because I get that that would make you uncomfortable,” he says lastly, face pained while he looks at him.

Dream feels frozen in his spot. Hyper-aware of his own body, he feels the heat of his mug move through his hands, making his fingertips tingle lightly. He feels his clothes against his skin, and his feet against the ground. His tongue is bitten red from the tension, and George’s eyes make his face feel like it’s on fire when he can’t suppress his blush anymore. He feels his heart working overtime to keep up with him, when his mind falls blank.

“It’s— it’s okay, you don’t need to answer or anything, I understand,” George then speaks up, looking away into the café awkwardly. “This wasn’t very professional of me, I know that, I just want us to get along as colleagues still without there being this... this unnoticed discrepancy between our intentions,” he says, finalizing his confession. He looks over Dream one last time before grabbing his coat from next to him in the booth. “I’ll uh... I’ll just get going now,” he says, lifting himself from the bench.

“No! No no no, don’t leave,” Dream blurts out, grabbing George’s wrist as he steps out of the booth. “Sit down again? Please?” He pleads, and George hesitates before he does as asked, still avoiding his gaze. He only looks back at him when Dream stands up instead.

“Scoot over,” he orders as he walks over to George’s bench and sits down beside him. Their knees touch for a second, but George is quick to move his leg away, leaving a layer of empty space between them. After a quick sip, Dream breathes deeply and relaxes.

“Yesterday morning, when you joined me after first period, right?” Dream asks, looking sideways

over his shoulder at George who nods, frowning in confusion. "Before you suggested going here, I had been mulling over how to tell you that I like you for like, an hour," he chuckles, realizing the stupidity of it. "I *was* going to ask you on a date, but you beat me to it," he adds as he leans his head back against the high divider of the booth.

"Wait, you're being serious?" George asks incredulously, tension visibly dissolving as they meet gazes again.

"Yes! I was so bummed we couldn't go yesterday, why'd you think I waited two hours for you to finish your classes?" Dream laughs.

"I thought you were just being nice, or you felt bad for me or something," George answers, letting it all work into him. "But then why did you wait outside this morning, when you brought me coffee? You always walk in, I thought you just didn't want to do that anymore," he questions.

"God, no, I was going to walk in, but you caught me staring before I could," Dream chuckles, rubbing his forehead with his fingers.

"Then why didn't you say anything just now, asshole! I was so embarrassed," he yells softly, smacking Dream's arm with the back of his hand.

"I'm a freezer, okay! You've got fight, flight, and freeze, and I freeze," Dream defends as he sits back up, but turning his body more towards George to make easier eye contact. "I thought you were going to say the opposite, that *you* were just being friendly and that *I* was wrong in thinking we were mutually flirting." George scoffs as he shakes his head.

"Why would I *kiss your nose* if I wasn't flirting with you?" George fires back at him.

"I don't know, bad impulse control?" Dream argues. "It was a weird day all together anyway, I couldn't think very clearly anymore," he says. One of his arms is now leaning on the seat, while his other lays on the table, legs pulled up slightly to sit sideways comfortably.

"Yeah, that it definitely was," George laughs softly, relaxing as he somewhat mimics Dream's position. A small silence falls over them, but not one that either minds. It gives them both a chance to *really* look over the other's features, rather than stealing secret little glances every once in a while like they had been doing since that first day. Dream takes in the exact shade of brown in his eyes, and how there's a few stray freckles sitting on his cheeks. The way his lips turn into a tiny smile, creating little laughter lines.

"So we feel the same?" Dream asks quietly, almost afraid to disturb the serenity that has settled over them.

"I suppose we do," George answers, just as softly.

"Then, can I...?" Dream starts his question, gaze falling down to George's lips, which turn themselves into his mischievous little grin.

"I don't know, can you?" He asks back, making Dream huff in fake exasperation.

"You really are a teacher, aren't you," Dream says as he leans in further, not diverting his gaze.

"Guess so," George whispers back, before the conversation is brought to a close with Dream pressing his lips against George's gingerly, eyes fluttering shut as the most welcome sense of nervousness expresses itself in his stomach and chest through warm tingles and swirls of content. The few seconds it lasts feel like minutes lost in space, but he's gently brought back down to Earth

when George pulls away, pecks him one last time, and then leans back with the most tender smile on his face. Dream releases a small exhale as he looks over him.

“I don’t usually kiss on the first date,” he blurts out clumsily, immediately frowning at his own words while he grabs his mug for comfort.

“Me neither,” George laughs it off with, shaking his head.

“Just to uhm… to clarify, I guess. Would you like to go on dates? With me, I mean, go on dates with me. Date me?” Dream rambles, getting confused with his own sentences as George chuckles.

“I do, yes,” he answers. “But let’s just keep it on the down-low, for now. It’s a lot of unnecessary pressure when an entire high school finds out,” he adds, and Dream agrees wordlessly as he nods, yet a beaming smile starts adorning his face.

“I’m still bringing you coffee each morning though, your classes would miss me if I just stopped that now,” he says casually before finishing his drink.

“I guess that’s fine,” George says like it’s a compromise, but Dream knows he likes it more than he’ll let on.

So he continues bringing George a cup of coffee and passion fruit flavored caramels, each morning, during first period, and the smile he gains in return lights up his world a little bit more with each passing week.

End Notes

so basically I'm projecting onto dnf again and nobody is going to stop me
spare a follow on twitter? @_OBLVN :)

all in favor of a smutty sequel, leave a comment, or send me a tweet, or send me a dm, I'll
take any incentive to write it honestly

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